

GARDENING

1/24/79

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"Blessed of the Lord be this land...for the precious fruits brought forth by the Sun and for the precious things put forth by the Moon." Deuteronomy, Ch. 33, vv. 13-14.

Gardeners are well aware of the rhythm of the seasons caused by the tilting of the earth on its axis. This tilting causes us to plant some crops in the summer and others in the winter but always in tune with the sun's rhythm.

There is another rhythm that gardeners can tune into; that of the moon. This rhythm is less obvious and more cosmic, but none the less viable.

By planting and transplanting by the phases of the moon, you can take advantage of natural forces of gravity, magnetism and light. The full moon and new moon, 14 days apart, are the peaks of influence.

The first significant magnetic forces occur two days before the new moon. Both short and extra-long germinating seeds (those taking about 28 days) are best planted at this time of minimum moonlight. Long germinating seeds (about 14 days) and the transplanting of seedlings are best done at the full moon and the next seven days.

Many lunar gardeners maintain all gardening chores should be done not only at a certain phase of the moon but also at the proper zodiac sign. For example, herb drying would be done only at a full moon in the sign of Leo. Compost would be made only at a full moon in the sign of Cancer, Virgo, Scorpio or Pisces. The Daily Planet Almanac tells which sign the moon is in.

First Quarter: During the first seven days from new moon to first quarter, lunar gravitational pull decreases, stimulating root growth. Lunar light increases, stimulating leaf growth.

Second Quarter: During the second seven days from new to full moon the lunar pull increases,



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slowing down root growth. Moonlight increases and stimulates leaf growth.

Third Quarter: During this period of full moon and after, lunar pull increases causing strong root growth. This is the time to transplant to take full advantage of root growth and help prevent root shock. This is also the time to plant long germinating seeds (about 14 days) so the new moon will help them germinate.

Fourth Quarter: During the last seven days from full to new moon, both lunar pull and lunar light decrease. This causes a balance decrease in plant growth, a period of rest. Both short and extra-long germinating should be planted two days before the new moon.

Although one cannot say your gardening efforts will fail if not in rhythm with the moon, planting, transplanting, and harvesting, by the moon does take advantage of naturally occurring forces, forces that can only help.

For more information on lunar gardening and organic gardening questions, send a self addressed stamped envelope to Community Garden Coordinator, Isla Vista Recreation and Parks District, 889 Camino del Sur, Isla Vista, CA 93017.